Workers held on 7-8 November 2002 and also in a Tripartite Committee meeting held on 18-19 February 2003. Such steps are being taken to bring about a workable consensus for implementation of the recommendations of the Commission. However, given the procedure involved, it is not possible to specify the time limit.

Annual growth rate

†1040. SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:
SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN':

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that annual growth rate of 4.4 per cent has been assessed for the year 2002-03 by the Central Statistical Organisation;

(b) whether Government agree with this assessment; and

(c) if not, Government's assessment in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI SATYABRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) As per the Advance Estimates released by the Central Statistical Organisation, the rate of growth, measured in terms of GDP at Factor Cost (at 1993-94 prices), is estimated to be 4.4 per cent for the year 2002-03.

(b) and (c) The Central Statistical Organisation is an agency of the Government of India and is responsible for coordination of statistical activities in the country, including National Income Accounting, and evolving and maintaining statistical standards. However, the estimates undergo revision as and when the latest information becomes available.

Hiring of private professional agencies

1041. SHRI KAILASH JOSHI:
SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have authorised Ministries to hire professional agencies to work out the impact assessment of big budget Centrally Sponsored Schemes in the States/UTs;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) what are the reasons that responsibilities for alleged diversion of funds are not fixed; and

(d) the steps taken to ensure fool proof system for proper utilisation of funds?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI SATYABRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) to (d) Yes Sir. The Government has proposed to get the impact assessment of all Centrally Sponsored Schemes for which evaluation has not been undertaken, done by Planning Commission or outside professional agencies in a time bound manner. Considering the large number of Centrally sponsored schemes under implementation, the demand for impact evaluation results is much larger than what the Government agencies, such as, Programme Evaluation Organisation and In-house Monitoring and Evaluation units of Ministries can deliver. The findings of evaluation studies, which include an assessment of physical and financial performance and impact of schemes, are made available to the implementing Ministries/Departments and State Governments for follow-up actions. The steps taken for improving the performance of programme formulation and implementation include convergence and weeding out of plan schemes, project approach with time bound targets for monitoring, mid-term evaluation and detailed impact studies of Centrally sponsored Schemes. In addition, the proposals of sthe Tenth Plan include, *inter-alia*, reforms of civil services to ensure transparency and accountability in implementation of development programmes.

BPL population

1042. SHRI C.O. POULOSE : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of persons included in the Below Poverty Line and Above Poverty Line category, State-wise;

(b) whether it is a fact that in most of the States the number of BPL families identified by the Planning Commission were less in number as compared to the number of families estimated by the State administration; and

(c) if so, the estimates of both the authorities alongwith the reasons for such difference, State-wise?